Project Managers' Advisory Group

MINUTES
June 16, 2008

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Attending: (* = by phone)

Bob Giannuzzi	EPMO
Jim Tulenko*	EPMO
Charles Richards	EPMO
Kathy Bromead	EPMO
Linda Lowe*	EPMO
Alisa Cutler	EPMO
Barbara Swartz	EPMO
Jesus Lopez	EPMO
Gaye Mays*	EPMO
Glenn Poplawski	ITS
James Myers	ITS
Karen Burke	ITS
Patsy Thames*	ITS
Dave Butts*	WRC
Lynne Beck	DHHS DMH/DD/SAS
Joe Cimbala	DHHS DMH/DD/SAS
Cheryl Ritter	DOT
Chris Cline	NCCCS
Subba Bandhulula	NCCCS
Sarah Joyner	ESC
Tory Russo	DHHS/DIRM
Caroline Jackson	DHHS/DPH
Lucy Cornelius*	DPI

Bob Giannuzzi welcomed everyone to the meeting. **Subba Bandhuvula** and **Tory Russo** were acknowledged as first time attendees.

Kathy Bromead presented **Subba** a letter from the SCIO recognizing her for her recent PMP certification.

Bob solicited and received approval of the May minutes.

Jesus Lopez reported that Cycle 7 of the EPMO's PMP Exam Prep class has concluded. Of the 15 attendees, three have signed up to take the exam in June. He also pointed out that the waitlist for the fall sessions is already at 16 candidates. **Jesus** thanked all the instructors, especially **Sarah Joyner** (4th time!), and also **Linda Lowe** for her invaluable assistance.

Cheryl Ritter advised that the Public Sector will not meet in July. The August meeting will have a DOT representative speaking on SAP PM applications. **Bob** reported on other imminent NCPMI meetings of interest (from the NCPMI website):
-   On June 19, the General Membership meeting was to feature Steve Davis speaking on *Planning and Tracking in Rapid Development Environments.*
-   The June 25 PMO Committee (LIG) will have Sheri Cassidy speaking on *ITIL Metrics.*

Alisa Cutler summarized Methodology Group activities:
- The proposed RACI template was discussed. **Alisa** solicited feedback within two weeks. The final version of the file will be posted on the EPMO website as well as on the PPM tool.
- The group is working on a new version (in Excel) of the closeout document that will facilitate calculations. **Sarah Joyner** asked if this will be integrated with the PPM tool. **Charles Richards** advised that this would be difficult in the current release but will be in the next release (PPS 2006).
- The group is also addressing planning issues with responsibilities and timing in the RFP process. This includes involvement of the PM, EPMO, Engineering & Architecture, and IT Procurement. **Alisa** solicited others to join in this process improvement activity.

Barbara Swartz reviewed the draft of the newly created Change Request Guidelines document created to assist PPM users in understanding the rules and processes. She asked for feedback by 6/23.

Barbara pointed out that the EPMO is working on a process to adjust the PPM workflow for projects that are using a non-waterfall approach. The draft process will be presented to PMAG for review.

Barbara next reviewed the proposed workflow for registered projects. Since the final version will be included in the 6/27 release of the process, feedback was requested in a week.

Bob passed out the following information on upcoming teleconferences of interest to the PM Advisory Group. He noted that three of the sessions focus on metrics. **Vicky Kumar** pointed out that for the councils the State dropped, the teleconferences are accessible, but not the research information. **Kathy Bromead** will follow up on our current entitlement with Corporate Executive Board.

Organization/website	Contacts	Upcoming Calls
NASCIO http://www.nascio.org/committees/projectmanagement/	Stephanie Jamison 859/514-9148 sjamison@AMRms.com Access 888/272-7337 conference ID 6916986	July 1 (3:00 PM) TBD
PMO Executive Council http://www.pmo.executiveboard.com/	Register at website	June 18 (12:00 PM) **State of the PMO Function Organizational Design, Mission, and Performance Metrics** July 22 (12:00 PM) **Lightweight Portfolio Stewardship: Striking the Right Balance Between Process Rigor and Executive Judgment**
CIO Executive Council http://www.cio.	Register at website	June 17 (10:00 AM) **Exploiting IT's Business Process**

executiveboard.com/		Vantage June 25 (7:00 APM) **Designing Business Focused Metrics of IT Value**
Application Executive Council http://www.aec.executiveboard.com/	Register at website	June 26 (6:00 PM) **Realizing Business Benefits** July 10 (11:00) **Introducing AEC's Cost Cutting Compendium**
Infrastructure Executive Council http://www.iec.executiveboard.com/	Register at website	June 18 (10:00 AM & 4:00 PM) **Business-Relevant Performance Metrics**
Information Risk Executive Council http://www.irec.executiveboard.com/	Register at website	July 22 (11:00) **Effective Techniques to Assess Critical IP Risks**
Enterprise Architecture Executive Council http://www.eaec.executiveboard.com/	Register at website	June 17 (11:00) **Aligning Enterprise and Distributed Architects for Maximum Productivity**

Jesus Lopez briefed the group on the EPMO's effort to revise its website. Stale information will be refreshed and new, relevant topics will be added. These will include quarterly PPM changes and the EPMO Newsletter.

Barbara Swartz has been assigned EPMO training coordination responsibility previously owned by **John McShane**, ITS' new CFO (Congratulations, John!). **Barbara** asked that feedback on interest in the four proposed courses (Requirements, RFP, BA Boot Camp, Estimating) be resent to her within two weeks. **Lucy Cornelius** and **Cheryl Ritter** advised that their respective agencies will provide additional seat requirements. Carolyn Jackson inquired if there are prerequisites for any of these offerings. **Kathy Bromead** responded that it's strictly agency prerogative.

Charles Richards reported on the change requests by the review board that will be included in the June 27 release. Besides the documents already discussed, included are:

Workflow/Process changes:
- Move "Business Requirements" from an "Agency Document Checklist" item to an "SCIO Requirement
- Add "Sponsor User Acceptance" document as an "SCIO Requirement"
- Baseline triple constraints at Gate 2 in Workflow document
- Automatically remove a PPM license when it has not been used for 12 months. Give agency 30 days notice that if they do not request keeping it. Review and update the licensing and operations principle document overall.

Configuration changes:

- Remove "Procurement", "Implementation" and "Closeout" from the "Type of Project"

Charles advised that new user training is available as a video accessible in the PPM tools, replacing face to face training. **Tory Russo** recommended posting FAQs to enhance the training. **Charles** and **Kathy** agreed and will try to make this change in the next release after 6/27.

Kathy stated that the EPMO may provide guidelines for Business Functional Requirements and acceptance criteria. **Lucy Cornelius** endorsed this idea since she's seen a lack of proper sponsor signoff.

Kathy talked about the feature articles in the EPMO newsletter to be published the following week. Topics include APM, status of the EPMO Improvement Plan, and using PPM filters. She also reminded PMs that newly developed software applications need to be added to APM as SW development projects close out.

Charles reported that the PPM upgrade to Microsoft PPS 2006 has been entered and already registered in PPM as a project with a target deployment at the end of 3Q08.

Lessons Learned from recently closed projects were distributed in advance but not discussed at the meeting.

Glenn Poplawski, Director of the newly formed ITS PMO, reported that the reorganization at ITS is still in progress. Divisions of responsibility are being sorted out.

Kathy suggested that the next meeting include a presentation on the role of the ITS Architecture and Engineering function. The August meeting will tentatively feature a talk on OSBM's role on project approval.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40.

NEXT MEETING
Monday, July 21, 2008
ITS Conference Room 2 or (919)981-5520

Lessons Learned Documentation

Exhibit A

Department of Commerce - Business Process Consulting and Client Relationship Management System

Initiation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Business Case / Project Charter	We had a very clear business case and a well-written Project Charter. The Commerce PMO was very helpful with articulating the business case in both idea and concept phases. Writing the Project Charter was an important exercise that helped us clearly think through many issues associated with the project. It was mainly the work of the Project Manager and PMO, we could have probably worked harder to get more involvement/input from the Core Project Team, but we were very early in the process.
2. Level 1 Budget	Looking back at our initial budget, we probably underestimated the cost of implementation and overestimated the cost of ongoing maintenance. I'm not sure how helpful it is for us to estimate staff labor cost.
3. Benefits	We did some work on estimating benefits that was marginally helpful. The benefits of this project are difficult to reduce to revenue increases or cost reductions/avoidance. These benefits are pretty indirect; however the direct benefits of providing the tools to change the culture of way economic development efforts are managed could be profound.
4. Procurement Plan (procurement strategy….build vs buy)	We did a lot of research and came to the right conclusion that the product we select should be a Software as a Service (SaaS) solution.
5. Project Approval Process	I don't remember the approval process being very onerous for this phase. Fortunately the project did not require monthly reports in the PPM tool.
6. Managing Sponsor Expectations	Sponsor expectations were well-managed during this phase. The sponsor understood the budget estimates and the time estimates of staff.
7. Managing Customer Expectations	We probably could have communicated more to our customers in the Department about the status of the project along the way. We may have also needed to communicate more clearly with managers about the impact of this system on their staff.
8. Other	While the project approval process was not very difficult, getting approval to issue the RFP was VERY difficult. It took much longer than expected and seemed overly complicated for a project of this size with a relatively modest budget. Also, we had a very robust, professional and comprehensive RFP evaluation process, but we found it a very frustrating and time consuming process to get the team's recommendation approved. This project was required to integrate with NCID. From the beginning, we have felt that this was an unnecessary burden on our project with significant added complexity and expense for not discernable value.

Planning & Design Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Managing Sponsor Expectations	We had a change in sponsor during this phase, but our expectations were managed fine.

2.	Managing Customer Expectations	We did not really communicate with our customers during this phase so we didn't have any issues with managing their expectations; however, this phase did require intense participation from the Core Project Team and it was difficult to consistently get full participation of the group, which did cause some issues later in the project regarding expectations of customers.
3.	Monthly Status Reporting	We were not required to enter monthly status reports in the PPM tool; however we were disappointed with the frequency of the status reporting by our vendor.
4.	Staffing Plan	Like we have done for other major cross-functional projects in the Department, we developed a Core Project Team that consisted of representatives from key constituencies in the Department. The Core Project Team was central to the success of the project.
5.	Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	The project schedule was provided one time by the vendor, but it was never carefully reviewed or updated on a consistent basis and we never used it as a reference to check where we were in the project. It was very underutilized for the entire project, but during this phase, the schedule was not an issue.
6.	ETS System Design Document	N/A This was not a required document for our project.
7.	Requirements Mapping	The main requirements mapping session was termed the Business Process Review session by the vendor. We managed this process fairly well by meeting as a group to complete the pre-BPR questionnaire and having pretty good participation in the two-day BPR session. We probably needed another two-day session with a little distance between the first session to get through everything with the detailed needed.

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	We could have done a much better job managing the vendor. The vendor was very knowledgeable about the product, but perhaps was not as strong in project management skills. At times it seemed as if there was too much for vendor's PM to complete and perhaps it would have been helpful for the PM to have additional support to complete reports, dashboards and weekly status reports. We also expected more business process recommendations from the vendor, as business process consulting was a very key part of this project. We were looking for more recommendations about how our business process should be organized, based on best practices of the vendor and their knowledge of the software.
2. Project Communication	We did a fairly good job regularly communicating with the Core Project Team and system users. I think you could always do this more often, but I believe the basic information was clearly communicated.
3. SLA Development (service level agreement)	As this is a SaaS, the SLA with the vendor was already in place. We did make some effort to try to develop a SLA with NCID group, but were never able to finalize a document.
4. Pilot	The vendor did provide a configuration review that ended up taking two sessions with our CPT. It was very helpful, but we did not have the best team participation for this review.
5. Development / Build	The vendor was very knowledgeable about the software and was able to effectively configure the application to our specifications.
6. Testing (test execution, verification & validation, test scripts, test cases)	We did some testing, but it was probably not as detailed or formal a process as it could have been. It would have been helpful to have all the data in the system, or at least a subset of all the data so that testing would be more effective.
7. Requirements Verification & Validation	There was no official process for this other than a sign-off document from the vendor.
8. Hosting Provider (setting up environments)	N/A As this is a SaaS the hosting provider was already established.
9. Backup / DR Strategy	We are satisfied with the backup/DR strategy employed by the vendor and we understand how we can get our data back if we ever chose to do so.

Implementation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Managing Customer Expectations	We continue to struggle with the vastness of the capabilities of the system and how to break it down into manageable chunks for the users. In addition, there are significant business process changes that will require ongoing discussion to resolve.
2. Issue Management	We developed a spreadsheet to manage issues and this has worked okay. It is difficult to keep it up to date, but it is an effort to catalog and manage issues/changes that need to made to the system.
3. Monthly Status Reporting	See comments above. We felt rushed by the vendor to wrap up the project after training even though there were several outstanding issues to resolve and because the vendor has moved on to other projects in addition to this one, it takes longer to resolve those outstanding issues.
4. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	See comments above.
5. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	See comments above. Since reports and dashboards are such a critical part of how users view the system, we would have appreciated more attention on those items and a better process for the CPT and the vendor to come to mutual agreement about what reports would be created on what timeframe and a better sign off that the report created meets our expectations.
6. Project Deliverables (refer to the list of deliverables in the PPM Tool that the PM said would be delivered)	N/A The project deliverables outlined in the vendor's SOW we all delivered with the exception of the weekly status report – only three were delivered. The Core Project Team did hold weekly meetings beginning in the execution and build phase that included an agenda.
7. Project Cost vs Budget Cost	There was not different between the project cost and the budget cost.
8. Change Management / Change Request	There was no official change management process for this project.
9. Implementation of Backup / DR	We are satisfied with the backup/DR strategy employed by the vendor and we understand how we can get our data back if we ever chose to do so.
10. Implementation of SLA	See comments above.
11. Hosting Provider	N/A As this is a SaaS the hosting provider was already established.
12. Production Readiness (software / hardware, process, personnel)	Although the dates for training were set and immovable due to the complexity of setting up the training sessions for 100 users in several different user groups, the software was not completely ready by the time training took place. Although the system was basically configured as expected, there were several important aspects, such as merge templates, reports and dashboards that were not operational. In addition, we were not really ready from a process point of view. This new system requires us to rethink many of our business processes and we should have done more to document those processes for our users before training.
13. Training (user, admin, etc)	Training sessions themselves were well-organized, well-communicated to staff and well-attended. The location for training worked very well. Online training modules were not as helpful as expected. Would be very helpful to have some way to download presentations. Some of the data that was to be migrated was not in the new system for training. This made the training for those particular users not as helpful as it could have been. The training would have been more effective if at least priority reports and dashboards were operational at training. Training would have been more effective if Merge Templates were operational. Training would have been more effective if more "case studies" were done for particular roles/users. One manager commented that had he fully understood the intense cultural change this new system would have generated, he would have made training longer and had it cover more than just technology, but also business process. Since the initial training provided by the vendor, we have followed up with additional training sessions with small groups of users and have discussed both the technology and business process implications and theses have been very successful sessions.
14. Other	There was no real plan/strategy around data migration. It ended up being a very ad hoc process. We should have had a detailed session to review the data we wanted to migrate and mapped it to the appropriate location in the new system. The data migration itself did not seem very complicated and the vendor's data migration expect was very knowledgeable, but the process was not smooth, did not have

	clear direction and ended up causing some complications for our IS staff as the time period for data migration ended up taking much longer than expected.

Exhibit B

ITS - SDC – LAN Services

Topic	Lessons Learned
Hosting Provider (setting up environments)	Setting up new environments from scratch always takes more effort than anticipated.
Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	Do not always depend on vendors to have all products in stock and readily available.
Project Manager	Using a Project Manager experienced with the EPMO processes will minimize the documentation and reporting efforts while assuring efficient movement through the processes.

Exhibit C

DPI - CECAS Hosting

Topic	Lessons Learned
Risk Management	Poorly defined technical requirements by vendor/customer resulted in costly scrap and rework and last minute heroics by ITS. Two examples include the production load balancer SSL environment and the production clustered database environment. In both cases, vendor made 11th hour changes or additions to the technical specifications. In both cases, this resulted in costly scrap and rework and last minute heroics (Load Balancer/SSL environment) and delays (Windows clustering). Communication not issue. Vendor had ample and frequent opportunities to validate requirements. Real issue related to lack of vendor participation/commitment during requirements/design stage of project.
Risk Management	Regular and frequent project status meetings between DPI, ITS and ECS were invaluable for identifying and resolving project issues, achieving planned milestones and fostering a spirit of camaraderie between geographically dispersed teams. This included the successful production cutover from the Atlanta Data center to the ITS Data Center on November 18, 2007. DPI Project manager instituted and facilitated these meetings.
Issue Management	Poorly defined technical requirements by vendor/customer resulted in costly scrap and rework and last minute heroics by ITS. Two examples include the production load balancer SSL environment and the production clustered database environment. In both cases, vendor made 11th hour changes or additions to the technical specifications. In both cases, this resulted in costly scrap and rework and last minute heroics (Load Balancer/SSL environment) and delays (Windows clustering). Communication not issue. Vendor had ample and frequent opportunities to validate requirements. Real issue related to lack of vendor participation/commitment during requirements/design stage of project.
Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	In order to avoid costly scrap and rework and last minute heroics, all stakeholders need to be fully committed from start of project. Note vendor participation and commitment not issue after initial deployment of infrastructure on October 1, 2007.